

**II) Please Amend Claims 1, 3-16, 18-23, and 25-26 as set for the blow:**

(Currently Amended) 1. A security tag comprising:

5                   a tag body;

                    an attaching means for attaching said tag body to an article;  
                    and

10                   a locking means for releasably preventing said attaching  
                    means from being removed from said article wherein said  
                    locking means is provided ~~for to~~ mechanically release by  
                    asserting a rotational force along a traversal direction to said  
                    locking means or magnetically ~~released~~ release by applying  
15                   a magnetic force along a vertical direction to said locking  
                    means to release said attaching means for detaching said tag  
                    body from said article.

(Original) 2. The security tag of claim 1 wherein:

20                   said locking means further includes a plurality of balls for  
                    tightly holding to said attaching means for releasably  
                    preventing said attaching means from being removed from  
                    said article.

25                   (Currently Amended) 3. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

                    said locking means further includes a mechanical unlocking  
                    means for mechanically applying a rotational ~~mechanical~~  
30                   force to said locking means to release said balls from said  
                    attaching means whereby said attaching means may be  
                    released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 4. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

5                   said locking means further includes a magnetic unlocking  
                  means for magnetically applying a ~~mechanical~~ vertical  
                  magnetic force to said locking means to release said balls  
                  from said attaching means whereby said attaching means  
                  may be released and detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended) 5. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

10                   said locking means further includes a ball tightening and  
                  loosening means for tightening said balls to said attaching  
                  means; and

15                   said locking means further includes a mechanical unlocking  
                  means for mechanically applying a rotational ~~mechanical~~  
                  force along a traversal direction to said ball tightening and  
                  loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching  
                  means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
20                   detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended) 6. The security tag of claim 2 wherein:

25                   said locking means further includes a ball tightening and  
                  loosening means for tightening said balls to said attaching  
                  means; and

30                   said locking means further includes a magnetic unlocking  
                  means for applying a ~~mechanical~~ magnetic force along a  
                  vertical direction to release said balls from said attaching  
                  means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
                  detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 7. The security tag of claim 5 wherein:

5                   said ball tightening and loosening means further includes a  
ball surrounding surface defining a restrict space and an  
expanded space for forcing said balls into said restrict space  
for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

10                   said mechanical unlocking means further mechanically  
applying a rotational ~~mechanical~~ force to said ball  
surrounding surface along a traversal direction to move said  
balls to said expanded space of said ball tightening and  
loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching  
means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 8. The security tag of claim 6 wherein:

20                   said ball tightening and loosening means further includes a  
ball surrounding surface defining a restrict space and an  
expanded space for forcing said balls into said restrict space  
for tightening said balls to said attaching means; and

25                   said magnetic unlocking means further applying a magnetic  
force along a vertical direction to said surrounding surface  
to move said balls to said expanded space of said ball  
tightening and loosening means for loosening said balls  
from said attaching means whereby said attaching means  
may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 9. The security tag of claim 7 wherein:

5                   said ball tightening and loosening means further includes  
ball holding cup having a plurality of holes for each of said  
balls surrounded by said ball surrounding surface wherein  
said locking means pressing said ball holding cup for forcing  
said balls into said restrict space for tightening said balls to  
said attaching means; and

10                   said mechanical unlocking means further mechanically  
applying a ~~mechanical~~ rotational force along a traversal  
direction to move said ball holding cup together with said  
balls to said expanded space of said ball tightening and  
loosening means for loosening said balls from said attaching  
15                   means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended) 10. The security tag of claim 8 wherein:

20                   said ball tightening and loosening means further includes a  
ball holding cup having a plurality of holes for each of said  
balls surrounded by said ball surrounding surface wherein  
said locking means pressing said ball holding cup for forcing  
said balls into said restrict space for tightening said balls to  
25                   said attaching means; and

30                   said magnetic unlocking means further applying a magnetic  
force along a vertical direction to move said ball holding cup  
together with said balls along said vertical direction to said  
expanded space of said ball tightening and loosening means  
for loosening said balls from said attaching means whereby  
said attaching means may be released and detached from  
said tag body.

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(Currently Amended) 11. The security tag of claim 1 further comprising:

5 a mechanical probe finger for mechanically pushing and  
applying a mechanical force along a traversal direction onto  
said locking means to rotate and release said attaching  
means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
detached from said tag body.

10 (Currently Amended) 12. The security tag of claim 1 further comprising:

a magnet for applying a magnetic force along said vertical  
direction onto said locking means to release said attaching  
means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
detached from said tag body.

15 (Currently Amended) 13. A security tag comprising an attaching means  
for attaching said tag to a protected article further comprising:

20 a locking means for locking said attaching means for  
releasably preventing said attaching means from being  
removed from said protected article wherein said locking  
means is provided to be unlocked for releasing said  
attaching means from said tag by one of at two different  
kinds of unlocking means wherein each of said two kinds of  
25 unlocking means applying at least two different kinds of  
forces along at least two different directions to said locking  
means.

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(Currently Amended) 14. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

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said locking means is provided to be unlocked by a mechanical unlocking means applying a rotational force along a traversal direction and a magnetic unlocking means applying a magnetic force along a vertical direction to said locking means.

(Currently Amended) 15. The security tag of claim 13 further comprising:

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a mechanical probe finger for pushing and applying a ~~mechanical~~ rotational force along said traversal direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and

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detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended)16. The security tag of claim 13 further comprising:

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a magnet for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction onto said locking means to release said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be released and detached from said tag body.

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(Original) 17. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

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said locking means further includes a plurality of balls for tightly holding to said attaching means for releasably preventing said attaching means from being removed from said article.

(Currently Amended) 18. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

5                   said locking means further includes a mechanical unlocking  
                  means for mechanically applying a ~~mechanical~~ rotational  
                  force along said traversal direction to release said balls from  
                  said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be  
                  released and detached from said security tag.

(Currently Amended) 19. The security tag of claim 13 wherein:

10                   said locking means further includes a magnetic unlocking  
                  means for applying a magnetic force along said vertical  
                  direction to release said balls from said attaching means  
                  whereby said attaching means may be released and  
15                   detached from said security tag.

(Currently Amended) 20. A method for protecting an article by using an  
attaching means for attaching a security tag to a protected article further  
comprising:

20                   preventing said attaching means from being removed from  
                  said protected article by releaseably locking said attaching  
                  means and unlocking and releasing said attaching means  
                  from said tag by either one of at two different kinds of  
25                   unlocking means with each of said two kinds of unlocking  
                  means applying at least two different kinds of forces along at  
                  least two different directions to said locking means.

(Currently Amended) 21. The method of claim 20 wherein:

5                   said step of locking said attaching means and then unlocking  
said attaching means by either of at least two different kinds  
of unlocking means further comprising a step of unlocking  
said attaching means by either a mechanical unlocking  
means for applying a rotational force along a traversal  
10                   direction and a magnetic unlocking means for applying a  
magnetic force along a vertical direction to said locking  
means.

(Currently Amended) 22. The method claim 21 further wherein:

15                   said step of unlocking said attaching means by a mechanical  
unlocking means further comprising a step of applying a  
mechanical probe finger for pushing and applying a  
~~mechanical~~ rotational force along said traversal direction  
onto said locking means to release said attaching means  
whereby said attaching means may be released and  
20                   detached from said tag body.

(Currently Amended) 23. The method of claim 21 further comprising:

25                   said step of unlocking said attaching means by a magnetic  
unlocking means further comprising a step of applying a  
magnet for applying a magnetic force along said vertical  
direction onto said locking means to release said attaching  
means whereby said attaching means may be released and  
detached from said tag body.

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(Original) 24. The method of claim 21 wherein:

5                   said step of releaseably locking said attaching means further  
                  comprising a step of employing a plurality of balls for  
                  tightly holding to said attaching means for releasably  
                  preventing said attaching means from being removed from  
                  said article.

(Currently Amended) 25. The security tag of claim 24 wherein:

10                   said step of unlocking said attaching means further  
                  comprising a step of employing a mechanical unlocking  
                  means for mechanically applying a ~~mechanical~~ rotational  
                  force along said traversal direction to release said balls from  
15                   said attaching means whereby said attaching means may be  
                  released and detached from said security tag.

(Currently Amended) 26. The security tag of claim ~~13~~ 24 wherein:

20                   said step of unlocking said attaching means further  
                  comprising a step of employing a magnetic unlocking means  
                  for applying a magnetic force along said vertical direction to  
                  release said balls from said attaching means whereby said  
                  attaching means may be released and detached from said  
25                   security tag.